

NCA

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NEWS ANALYSIS NO. 1-0253  
JOHN ALBERT

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# THE SOVIET VIEW OF DETENTE

ANNCR:

IN HIS SPEECH TO THE COMMUNIST PARTY CONGRESS IN MOSCOW, GENERAL SECRETARY BREZHNEV FAVORED CONTINUATION OF DETENTE WITH THE UNITED STATES, BUT REITERATED THE SOVIET VIEW OF ITS MEANING. VOA NEWS ANALYST JOHN ALBERT HAS THESE OBSERVATIONS:  
VOICE:

MISTER BREZHNEV WAS RATHER DIRECT AND SPECIFIC IN HIS INTERPRETATION OF WHAT DETENTE MEANS AND DOES NOT MEAN FOR THE SOVIET UNION. DETENTE, HE SAID, "LEAVES NO ROOM FOR NEUTRALISM AND COMPROMISE IN THE STRUGGLE BETWEEN TWO IDEOLOGIES." DETENTE COULD NOT BE PERMITTED TO ABOLISH OR EVEN TO ALTER THE CLASS STRUGGLE. NOR COULD WESTERN CRITICISM PREVENT THE SOVIET UNION, IN THE NAME OF DETENTE, FROM SUPPORTING SO-CALLED NATIONAL LIBERATION MOVEMENTS. AND, FINALLY, SAID MISTER BREZHNEV: "WE MAKE NO SECRET OF THE FACT THAT WE SEE DETENTE AS THE WAY TO CREATE MORE FAVORABLE CONDITIONS FOR PEACEFUL SOCIALIST AND COMMUNIST CONSTRUCTION."

TO THE WEST THIS SOUNDS VERY MUCH LIKE A CLAIM THAT DETENTE MUST BE TO THE ADVANTAGE OF THE SOVIET UNION. SOVIET LEADERS REJECT ANY WESTERN CRITICISM OF WHAT APPEAR TO BE UNILATERAL SOVIET MOVES TO GAIN POLITICAL AND MILITARY BENEFIT FROM DETENTE AND TO ACCEPT AND USE WESTERN TECHNOLOGY WITHOUT OFFERING ANYTHING IN RETURN. THE GENERAL SECRETARY SEES SUCH CRITICISM AS AN ATTEMPT BY CERTAIN CIRCLES IN THE

WEST TO RETURN TO THE COLD WAR, AND HE CHARACTERIZES ANY TALK OF INCREASED SOVIET MILITARY BUDGETS AND A SOVIET THREAT TO WESTERN NATIONS AS A "MONSTROUS LIE."

THUS MISTER BREZHNEV PAINTS A PICTURE OF A PEACE-LOVING SOVIET UNION, INTERESTED ONLY IN IMPROVING RELATIONS WITH THE UNITED STATES AND SAFEGUARDING PEACE, BUT HAMSTRUNG BY THE "MILITARY-INDUSTRIAL COMPLEX" IN THE UNITED STATES. MORE DETAILS IN THIS PICTURE COME FROM DR. GEORGIY ARBATOV, REGARDED AS THE FOREMOST SOVIET EXPERT ON AMERICAN AFFAIRS AND DIRECTOR OF USA AND CANADIAN STUDIES. HE HAS EXPRESSED HIMSELF IN INTERVIEWS WITH RADIO MOSCOW AND IN A GUEST COLUMN IN THE AMERICAN MAGAZINE, NEWSWEEK. IF DR. ARBATOV FULLY MEANS WHAT HE WRITES, THEN HE IS THE VICTIM OF A DRASTIC MISUNDERSTANDING AND A DANGEROUS MISCALCULATION. CRITICS OF DETENTE IN THIS COUNTRY ARE NOT ATTACKING THE CONCEPT OF PEACEFUL CO-EXISTENCE. THEY ARE ATTACKING THE ONE-SIDED INTERPRETATION THEY FEEL SOVIET LEADERS ARE PUTTING ON DETENTE. AMONG THOSE CONCERNED WITH SOVIET POLICIES AND ACTIONS -- IN THE NAME OF DETENTE -- ARE PROMINENT MEMBERS OF CONGRESS, MANY EDITORIAL WRITERS AND RESPECTED PUBLIC PERSONALITIES. AND MANY OF THEM HAVE FOR YEARS ADVOCATED TRUE DETENTE, THAT IS MUTUAL RESTRAINT BY THE TWO SUPER-POWERS IN INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS, EQUITABLE ARMS REDUCTIONS AND RENUNCIATION OF UNILATERAL ADVANTAGE ON THE WORLD SCENE, AS AGREED IN THE MOSCOW UNDERSTANDINGS OF 1972.

DR. ARBATOV DOES NOT DENY THAT THE SOVIET UNION TODAY HAS GREATER ECONOMIC AND MILITARY POWER THAN EVER BEFORE IN ITS HISTORY. AND HE CLAIMS TO UNDERSTAND

THE AMERICAN CONCERN OVER DEVELOPMENTS IN AREAS SUCH AS PORTUGAL AND ANGOLA. THE CONCERN, OF COURSE, IS OVER ATTEMPTS, BACKED BY THE SOVIET UNION, TO IMPOSE GOVERNMENTS BY FORCE IN THOSE TWO COUNTRIES. BUT DOCTOR ARBATOV ARGUES THAT EVENTS THERE RESULTED SOLELY FROM THE AMERICAN DEFENSE OF WHAT HE CALLS "OBVIOUSLY DOOMED UNDERTAKINGS AND REGIMES." THE SOVIET EXPERT ON AMERICAN AFFAIRS CALLS IT A "MYTH" THAT DETENTE HAS BEEN A ONE-WAY STREET. AT THE SAME TIME, HE BLAMES AMERICAN COLD-WARRIORS AND THEIR DOMESTIC INTEREST IN THE ELECTION CAMPAIGN FOR THEIR CHARGES AGAINST THE SOVIET UNION. AND HE PREDICTS THAT NO PRESIDENTIAL CANDIDATE CAN WIN WHO ARGUES AGAINST DETENTE.

THE FORD ADMINISTRATION DOES NOT AGREE WITH DOMESTIC CRITICS WHO CHARGE THAT IN RELATIONS WITH THE SOVIET UNION ALL THE ADVANTAGE HAS BEEN ON MOSCOW'S SIDE. BUT THE ADMINISTRATION IS DISTURBED ABOUT THE CONTINUING SOVIET MILITARY BUILDUP WHICH GOES FAR BEYOND THE NEEDS OF DEFENSE, AND ABOUT POLICIES AND ACTIONS WHICH GO FAR BEYOND TRADITIONAL SOVIET AREAS OF NATIONAL INTEREST. THIS CONCERN OVER THE SOVIET MILITARY BUILDUP IN OFFENSIVE NUCLEAR AND CONVENTIONAL WEAPONRY, AS SUBSTANTIATED BY MANY INDEPENDENT STUDIES, IS BASED NOT ON "MYTH," BUT ON PROVEN FACTS. DR. ARBATOV IS ABSOLUTELY RIGHT WHEN HE WRITES THAT THE OVERWHELMING MAJORITY OF AMERICANS SUPPORT DETENTE WITH THE SOVIET UNION IN THIS NUCLEAR AGE. BUT THEIR DEFINITION OF DETENTE APPEARS GREATLY AT VARIANCE WITH THAT OFFERED BY THE SOVIET LEADERSHIP.

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